



# Town Meeting



*Bulletin* OF AMERICA'S  
TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR  
Sponsored by THE READER'S DIGEST

## Should We Have a Single Department for Our Armed Forces?

Moderator, **GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.**

### *Speakers*

**JOSEPH LAWTON COLLINS**  
**HAMILTON HOLT**

**C. M. COOKE, JR.**  
**BRADLEY DEWEY**

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COMING NOVEMBER 29th

## Should We Support the Continuance of Colonial Empires?

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TUNE IN EVERY THURSDAY, AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY—8:30 p.m., E.S.T.





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The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of view presented.

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# Town Meeting

Bulletin of America's Town Meeting of the Air



George V. Denny, Jr., Moderator

## Should We Have a Single Department for Our Armed Forces?

### Announcer:

*The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine, welcomes you to another stirring session of America's Town Meeting—the program that gives both sides of issues affecting your life and mine. Tonight, here at Town Hall, New York, four authorities clash over a problem that is vital to our national defense. Now, to open this important session, *The Reader's Digest* brings you the president of Town Hall, the founder and moderator of America's Town Meeting, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. We had quite an exciting time last Thursday, didn't we? I want to thank you for your phenomenal response and very generous praise of that meeting on the Palestine question and to pass your compliments on to the audience that was here in Town Hall last Thurs-

day, which behaved so well under terrific emotional pressure.

Tonight our subject is less emotional, but no less important, for it concerns the very vital future defense of this country. Judging by what the scientists and some military experts tell us about the possibility of sudden attack from robot bombs, we'd better give serious attention to this question of national defense, for the time is past when wars can be confined to soldiers on battlefields and seamen on battleships.

I know that I express the gratitude of thousands of Americans when I congratulate Secretary of War Patterson and Secretary of the Navy Forrestal for permitting such frank and honest discussion of this very urgent question by the officers of the Army and Navy, in consultation with the citizens of this country.

We're as anxious as you are, Secretary Patterson and Secretary Forrestal, to find the right answer



to this question, because we have a great stake in it. Should we have a single department for our armed forces?

We know that the real test of the soundness of any organization is its ability to accomplish the results for which it was established.

Lieutenant General Joseph Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff of the Ground Forces, who commanded the Seventh Corps when it landed on the shores of Normandy, presented, a short time ago to the Senate Military Affairs Committee in Washington, a plan or organization for the armed forces as proposed by the War Department. I have your chart here with me, General Collins. I wonder if you will give us in your own words a brief description of what that plan involves.

**General Collins:** The Army's proposal is that the war and navy departments be unified into a single department, headed by a civilian secretary of the armed forces, who would have an undersecretary as his principal civilian adviser, and a chief of staff as his principal military adviser.

The secretary would also have at least three or more civilian assistant secretaries who would supervise the activities of the department on such important matters as scientific research in the development of new weapons, the procurement of munitions and supplies, and a much-needed public information service.

Operating under this unified direction at the top would be the three major components of our

fighting forces—the Air, the Army, and the Navy, and I hasten to add that I have named them in alphabetical order, and in no sense in any order of seniority, as they would, of course, be coequal.

Each of these components would have its own chief of staff and a maximum of autonomy consistent with military efficiency and necessary economy. In addition, there would be a directorate of common supply and hospitalization which we expect would develop by gradual process of evolution into a directorate of common supply and services.

In addition, we would continue the joint chiefs of staff organization which now includes the heads of the Army, Navy, and Air, as an advisory body to the President in his capacity as Commander in Chief of the armed forces. The joint chiefs would advise the President on national military policy, strategy, and the annual budgetary requirements necessary to implement a unified military program.

The execution of this program would be done by the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, and the directorate of common supply, under the unified administration of the secretary of the armed forces.

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, General Collins. That sounds like a *Reader's Digest* version of your Senate testimony. We'll hear your arguments in behalf of that position in just a moment.

Vice Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr. was during the war successively

Commander of the U.S.S. Pennsylvania, and Chief of Staff of the United States Fleet. He is now Deputy Chief of Naval Operations and is the corresponding spokesman to General Collins for the Navy Department. Admiral Cooke, would you be good enough to state the Navy's alternative to this proposal?

**Admiral Cooke:** The Navy does not yield to anyone in insistence on teamwork and unity. The Navy would achieve over-all unity of security by providing for organized coordination of diplomacy, war production and the armed services. With regard to the army plan for effecting unification of the armed services, as briefly touched on by General Collins, the Navy believes this unification should be preserved by passing a law to continue the joint chiefs of staff organization.

Each chief, as well as the joint group, must have authority if they are to be responsible for effecting real coordination. The Navy is opposed to relegating the joint chiefs of staff to the secondary and advisory function recommended in the plan.

Further, the Navy considers that the Navy establishment should not be by-passed as provided in the Army proposal. Naval operations as a whole must be directed through the chief of naval operations and not by a chief of staff of the armed forces, executive of the secretary of the armed forces.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Admiral Cooke. We'll hear your arguments very

shortly. In the meantime, I want to welcome your associate, Mr. Bradley Dewey, former rubber director and consultant to several bureaus of the armed forces, and Mr. Hamilton Holt, president of Kiwanis International, who will support General Collins' position.

This is Kiwanis night on America's Town Meeting, and we welcome to our listening audience several hundred listening discussion groups organized by the 2,400 chapters of the Kiwanis International throughout the country who are participating in this nationwide Town Meeting tonight. So let's get down to business and hear the arguments of our first distinguished guest, Lieutenant Joseph Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff of the Army Ground Forces. General Collins. (*Applause.*)

**General Collins:**

Mr. Denny, my personal interest in this subject dates back to an incident on the beach at Guadalcanal, a few months after the fighting there had ceased in 1943. A navy commodore and I were having a friendly discussion of a problem having to do with the army and navy shipping priorities in the Solomon Islands. Concluding his views on the problem, the commodore said, "Well, General, this is really the Navy's war out here. The Army's war is in Europe."

A year later I landed on the beaches of Normandy as part of a great Army that had been transported and given magnificent gunfire support by a splendid Navy, the whole watched over and



guarded by a thundering array of mighty airplanes that had not only cleared the sky of enemy but had isolated the beach area with its bombs and had dropped two whole divisions of infantry ahead of us.

I knew then for keeps that there was no such thing as the Army's war, or for that matter, the Navy's war, or the Air's war. The same great advances in aviation, in science, in means of communications, the same overwhelming need for common action to put down the ghastly threat of Nazism that had created "one world," had produced also "one war."

Under the stress of this integrated war, but only after long and costly delay, the armed services had gotten together with singleness of purpose under a unified command on every battlefield except in the Pacific. I believe that Admiral Cooke, who follows me in this debate, will agree that there were some serious difficulties and delays because of the lack of a single commander in that theater.

It is this unity of direction which proved so essential to our armed forces in the field that we believed should be brought to the direction of our armed forces in Washington, through a unification of the war and navy departments. We learned this lesson of unification in the field the hard way, with much duplication of effort and much costly extravagance.

It will require unity of thought and direction from Washington to keep alive the gains we have made so that we do not lapse back into our prewar doldrums. The country

simply cannot afford to permit each of our armed services to go its own way, as these services often did before Pearl Harbor.

Unification does not mean that we should merge our Army, Navy, and Air Forces into one puttylike force in which these great services would lose their identity or specific functions. In fact, we propose to guarantee the autonomy of each of our major fighting components—Air, Army and Navy.

The Air has fought hard for its rightful place in the sun against bitter opposition, in years gone by, from some elements in both Army and Navy. Few of our radio listeners, tonight, know that as late as 1939, by agreement of the Army and Navy, our land-based aircraft were prohibited from flying more than 100 miles to sea. It was said to be too dangerous and then, anyhow, the sea and the air over the sea was to be the province of the Navy.

This same question is arising again. It will take sound unity of direction in Washington to resolve properly the functions to be assigned this new air power of ours. Its current autonomy rests on the war powers of the President which terminate six months after the war ends, unless Congress takes prior action.

The only alternate proposals to unification suggested to date are to allow the current war and navy departments to drift along with the Air dropping back to its subordinate position as just another branch of the Army, or to create a third independent department of

Air to join in the fight for congressional appropriations and public support.

It is bad enough now when the postwar program of one department of the armed services is submitted to the Congress without any prior consideration by the other department. Imagine the confusion that would exist in the minds of the Congress and the taxpayers who must pay the bills, if three independent departments followed such a procedure.

Modern war is too costly in money and men to warrant independent action in preparation for any possible future war which, more than ever before, will be one war. Only by integrating the war and navy departments into one department of the armed forces can we obtain the maximum military efficiency from every dollar that you and I pay for national security. *(Applause.)*

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, General Collins. Now while we keep your views in mind, let's hear the Navy's position on this question by Vice Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr., Deputy Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Cooke. *(Applause.)*

#### **Admiral Cooke:**

Let me repeat, as I said in my opening remarks, that the Navy favors the unification of the armed services by the continuance of the joint chiefs of staff which proved so successful in bringing about our recent victories. The Army, opposing this method of unification,

would substitute a single department with a single chief of armed forces.

At the peak of the war, the United States spent over eighty million dollars a day on naval effort; roughly, the labor of eight million men and women in support of three million in the Navy—11 million total. To insure best use of these resources in beating the enemy at sea quickly, with minimum loss of life, it was obviously necessary to vest the naval responsibility in Washington in a naval officer, Admiral King.

The Army spent a hundred and thirty million dollars a day; roughly thirteen million men and women in support of seven or eight million fighters—twenty million total.

Naturally and correctly, the overall military direction of this effort in Washington was vested in army officers.

Field commands of this enormous effort were exercised by naval officers where operations or campaigns were purely or predominantly sea. For land operations, over-all unified command was under an army officer. In each case, the character of operations determined the choice of service of the unified commander.

We did not entrust command of such enormous resources and precious lives to an officer not experienced or versed in the kind of operations to be undertaken. We did not have a naval officer in charge of Eisenhower's three million troops in Germany, nor a land officer conducting the battle against



the U-boats, nor directing the Pacific Ocean campaign.

Yet we are being urged immediately to establish in Washington such a command: a single military commander over the Air, Ground Force, and Navy Departments and, in addition, independently of these, in direct operational command of all our field forces—Army, strategic Air Forces, Fleets—a supreme military commander of the war efforts of over thirty million of our population—eleven million in service—a command greater than that of the Chief of the great German General Staff.

The proposed command entirely by-passes the Navy Department and takes away the authority of the joint chiefs of staff. What guaranteed naval autonomy would we have here?

We were able to establish successful unified command in the field because any particular operation was, in its essence, a land, land-air, or sea operation. But the global campaigns, directed from Washington, were both land and sea. The joint chiefs of staff had to supervise simultaneously major land campaigns in Europe and Asia and major sea campaigns in the Atlantic and Pacific.

Our Navy's task was to secure and maintain control of 100 million square miles of ocean, as well as to support large scale land operations overseas.

The war waged by Germany was not the complex global war fought by the United States. Nevertheless, the German's single over-all military command, which the Army

proposes we adopt, committed serious strategic blunders that proved fatal to Germany, whereas the United States using the comprehensive and unified command of the joint chiefs of staff has been fortunate in the uniform correctness of the strategic decisions made and actions taken in Washington.

In spite of the rapid and unprecedented success of this organization, we're being high pressured immediately to replace it by a single over-all commander, in order to safeguard our security—to act first and to study later.

Our strategic frontiers in the Eastern Atlantic and Western Pacific must be maintained against any probable future challenge by enemy sea power. In 1940, Germany had overwhelming air power and ground power but did not have sea power and could not and did not invade England. In 1944, the Allies with overwhelming air power, adequate ground power, did have sea power and could and did invade the continent.

The future will bring changing conditions which sea power must face in order to preserve our country's immunity from invasion or close attack. Those responsible for coping with these problems must have authority to provide for naval growth and meet the Navy's share of the burden of national security. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Admiral Cooke. Now, Mr. Holt, while you are the president of the Kiwanis International, I know you are speaking



tonight as an individual and as a representative American businessman, president of Park Memorials of Macon, Georgia. I take pleasure in presenting Mr. Hamilton Holt. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Holt:**

Yes, Mr. Denny, I am speaking tonight for myself as a civilian and I hope that all of our people will make up their minds on this question only after they have heard both sides. I take my stand with General Collins on this question. All of my instincts and judgment as a businessman tell me that we can provide the best system of national defense for this country if we have a single department for all of our armed forces—a department operating under one secretary and a single chief of staff with Army, Navy, and Air Forces on an equal footing under this unified direction.

Admiral Cooke is alarmed lest this plan should interfere with the future growth and development of the Navy. I do not see, Admiral Cooke, that this need be the case at all. What we want in this situation is the kind of setup that will give us sound decisions, wise decisions, in the light of all the facts, not just the facts gathered by the Navy, but the facts gathered by the Army, Navy, and Air Forces. This information properly coordinated with the information gathered by other governmental departments, particularly the State Department, will, it seems to me, produce the wisest decisions.

I know that any businessman in America, large or small, will agree that the proper organization of facts and information is the first essential of sound business judgment and, Admiral Cooke, those figures you have cited certainly indicate that national defense is big business.

We are told that in modern war supply is 80 per cent of the battle. We know that the number of persons engaged in actual combat is few compared with the number engaged in supply. If there were time, I could give you some astounding instances of duplication and extravagance in this and earlier wars because of lack of joint direction in this area.

During this war, American businessmen were bewildered and confused by having the Army, Navy, and Air Forces contending and competing with each other for materials, for labor, and for manufactured products. There will not be time for this sort of thing if we have another war.

From all we civilians hear of the atomic bomb and other new and terrible weapons of warfare, I am convinced that we must be able to act and act quickly if we are to be prepared to defend this Nation from another sneak attack.

The time to eliminate the confusion and bewilderment is now while we are at peace, but many of the businessmen who are required to produce the implements of war do not believe that this will be done so long as the Army

and Navy insist upon going their separate ways.

In football, one coach may work with the line, another with the backfield, and still another with the ends, but, from day to day, they train and practice as a team. Moreover, they have a head coach who relies upon only one man to call the plays.

In football, the score and a few bruised bodies are at stake. In war, the safety of our country and the lives of our people are at stake.

Let us not forget that we are all tremendously concerned with preserving the lives of the boys who fight our wars. We realize that the primary function of all branches of our armed forces is to win a war, but if excessive loss of lives or the needless destruction or waste of property occurs, our victories can be turned into dismal failures.

The staggering lesson of our humiliating defeat at Pearl Harbor refuses to die. The information which has been given to us is piecemeal and confusing. But what we have been given points clearly to the absolute necessity for a single department whose instructions could have been promptly followed.

Moreover, had a single department been responsible, we would have known long ago whether the blame for that crushing defeat lay at the scene of action or in Washington.

Create a single department and you create a team, each segment of which is trained and developed

to play its proper role, each fully instructed as to what its role is and how it is to be played, each supplied with the men and materials necessary to play its role most effectively. Give this team a coach for each department, a head coach to put them together as a team, and a quarterback to call the plays and you will have an effective unit fighting for our country—not a group of individual stars who know nothing of team play until the guns of the enemy are trained upon them. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Hamilton Holt. Now another American businessman, president of Dewey and Almy Chemical Company and also president of the American Chemical Society, who served recently as the Nation's rubber director, and is now consultant of several bureaus of the armed forces—Mr. Bradley Dewey. (*Applause.*)

#### **Mr. Dewey:**

General Collins and Mr. Holt ask Congress and the American people to act first on this vitally important matter and to study it later. As a businessman, it seems to me that it is always a better course to study first and act afterwards. This is not the moment for final decisions. The complex issues are clouded by partisanship. Our nerves are frayed at the end of a long war which has not yet brought real peace.

General Collins, Admiral Cooke, and Mr. Holt—all of us—desire



unity. But the Army wants to achieve this unity by a kind of magic. With one wave of the wand, it proposes to create a new cabinet post and, presto chango, as Mr. Holt would have it, the best and wisest decisions flow forth. Sweet unity with all of its fair virtues of efficiency on the battlefield and in the fields of industry, science, manpower, and what not comes out of the hat.

This magic way always looks like the best way to solve the difficult problem. Concentration of size and power always looks like the easy solution. In business matters, monopoly looks like the answer, but it isn't the democratic answer. It isn't the American way.

The American way is the co-operative way—not the way of a dictatorship which the Army here appears to desire.

Since Pearl Harbor, as General Collins tells us, we have learned the value of unity and staff planning in field commands. The joint chiefs of staffs gave us this unity. Does General Collins seriously suggest that the services which learned the necessity of unity, as he says, the hard way, at the cost of lives and treasure will forget or disregard the lesson unless we set up a superpoliceman in the figure of a politically appointed cabinet officer?

As a plain civilian, I cannot believe that the brilliant leaders who won our wars—men like General Collins himself—will permit us to drift back, as he says, to pre-Pearl Harbor days. Rather,

as one who has worked with the armed forces since 1914, I know that, given the time and the opportunity which peace brings, they will carry on this work of unity so well started in the stress of war. They will achieve unification in the joint purchasing of common items, common use of transportation and storage, and the co-operative use of medical and hospital facilities, cooperation in service and supplies.

But there are important fields to which competition and rivalry must remain free to win scientific wars. In this war, one of the reasons civilian scientists made tremendous contributions was the very existence of separate armed services. Only too often new developments rejected by one service, but sponsored by another, matured into weapons decisively affecting the course of the war.

The first high-velocity aircraft rockets produced by the Navy were shipped by air for army use in Europe when the mechanized German forces were fleeing through France. Radio aircooled aircraft engines, disregarded by some, finally found their way into 75 per cent of all combat planes of the Army, the Navy, and the Marines.

Restriction of ideas would have lost us flamethrowing tanks, Nippon fire bombs, and the ducks. The proximity fuse was scorned by some but enthusiastically accepted by others. It was credited with turning the Battle of the Bulge.

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**BRADLEY DEWEY**—Mr. Bradley Dewey is Chairman of the Guided Missile Sub-Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and consultant to various bureaus of the Armed Forces. Born in Burlington, Vermont, in 1887, he has an A.B. degree from Harvard, and a B.S. degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. From 1909 to 1917, Mr. Dewey was a research chemist and later director of the research laboratory for the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company. In 1917, he entered the U.S. Army as a captain and later was made a colonel in the Chemical Warfare Service in charge of the gas defense division. In 1919 he became a co-founder of the Dewey and Almy Chemical Company in Cambridge, Mass. Since he has become president of the company.

In 1942, Mr. Dewey was made deputy rubber director in the War Production Board and in 1943 was made director. He was also consultant in the Quartermaster Corps.

**JOSEPH LAWTON COLLINS** — Lieutenant General J. Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff of the Ground Forces, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1896. He attended Louisiana State University for one year and in 1917 he received his B.S. degree from the United States Military Academy. He was given a commission as second lieutenant in 1917 and advanced through the grades to brigadier general. He was a major general in May, 1942. After the completion of World War I, he served in Germany in the Headquarters of the American Forces until 1921.

General Collins was an instructor at the U.S. Military Academy from 1921 to 1925, at Infantry School from 1927 to 1931, and in the Army War College from 1938 to

1940. In 1940-41, General Collins was assistant secretary in the War Department General Staff. In 1941, he was also chief of staff of the VII Army Corps stationed at Birmingham, and in 1941-42 was chief of staff of the Hawaiian Department. In May, 1942, he became commander of the 25th Division. He is now Chief of Staff of the Ground Forces.

**CHARLES MAYNARD COOKE, JR.** — Vice Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr., was born in 1896, in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He received a B.S. degree from the University of Kansas in 1905, and a B.S. from the United States Naval Academy in 1910. He was commissioned an ensign in the U.S. Navy in 1912 and advanced through the grades to rear admiral in June, 1942.

During World War II Vice Admiral Cooke was commander of the U.S.S. Pennsylvania and later Chief of Staff of the U.S. Fleet. He is now Deputy Chief of Naval Operations.

**HAMILTON HOLT** — Editor and educator, and now president of Kiwanis International, Hamilton Holt was born in Brooklyn in 1872. With an A.B. from Yale, Mr. Holt did postgraduate work in sociology and economics at Columbia University. He also has a long list of honorary degrees. From 1897 to 1913, Mr. Holt was managing editor of *The Independent*; from 1913 to 1921, he was editor and owner; and in 1921, he became consulting editor.

Since 1925, Hamilton Holt has been president of Rollins College at Winter Park, Florida. He has traveled widely. He belongs to numerous educational, civic and political groups. He is well known as a lecturer and is the author of several books.

I submit to you once more that General Collins and Mr. Holt are asking for more overhead and more expense. Mr. Holt has told you, and I quote, "that any businessman in America, large or small, will agree that the proper organization of facts and information is the first essential of sound business judgment."

Before we act, there should be a factual study by a group representing the Congress, the Presi-

dent, the services, industry, labor, and science. Let us know the facts before we act. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Bradley Dewey. Now, gentlemen, could we have a little discussion among the four of you up here around the microphone. Perhaps General Collins would like to start off here. We haven't heard from you for a time, General.



**General Collins:** I just want to make an additional comment in amplification of my original statement as to what the War Department plan was. In no sense is it intended that the Chief of Staff of the armed forces who is not a commander will assume command of the operations of the Navy or of the Air or of the Army.

I'd like to ask Admiral Cooke how he explains the fact that he agrees with the principle of unity of command in the field and then say that he disagrees with it in Washington?

**Admiral Cooke:** The duty assigned to the chief of staff of the armed forces is in direct command of all the theaters and areas, or field forces—those that are outside of the United States—in time of war, they constitute our Army, our Navy, our strategic Air.

I tried to bring out in my statement that the problem in Washington was not an operation which was purely a land operation, or predominantly a land operation, such as moving across the channel into Europe and fighting a 11-month's land war against Germany. The problem in Washington is to supervise that kind of war under the executive direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Marshall, representing the joint chiefs of staff and at the same time to conduct a sea war in the Pacific—68 million square miles of the earth's surface—under a naval commander and under the executive direction of Admiral King, also representing the joint chiefs of staff.

**Mr. Denny:** General Collins?

**General Collins:** I might add that we plan no change in that procedure. The joint chiefs of staff would continue to act in the manner which Admiral Cooke has just indicated. The difference is that in peacetime these joint chiefs of staff would have to prepare a coordinated program for the national defense, a budget which would implement that program, and then after its approval by the President, the administration of it would be in the hands of a single civilian administrator, the secretary of the armed forces.

**Mr. Denny:** Admiral Cooke?

**Admiral Cooke:** I would like to call attention to the chart, which has been published throughout the United States, that the function of the joint chiefs of staffs as set up is for recommendations only. They have no authority for implementing their recommendations. Further, the three chiefs of staff that head their respective services are under a chief of staff of the armed forces who is the executive of the secretary and is necessarily as much in command of all the field forces as was General Marshall during the past war.

Now, if you've got a general and you've got three subordinate generals sitting on the joint chiefs of staff with him, what relation do they have in regard to him who is their boss? They are not, in my opinion, free agents.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. I hope the photographer got a picture of this admiral and general up

here together. This is a historic event. (*Laughter.*) Now let's hear from these civilians. Mr. Holt, have you a question?

**Mr. Holt:** Yes, I have a question to ask Mr. Dewey. Mr. Dewey, we both agreed in our discussions that to examine a matter, to get all of the facts, is always wise and sound business before reaching a decision. Usually, we set up hypothetical cases where we have no experience. I wonder if you can describe any hypothetical case that would give us as much experience as the very devastating war through which we have just traveled.

**Mr. Dewey:** Mr. Holt, and I presume there are "no holts" barred (*laughter*), I cannot, and I submit that we learned a lot from that. We learned how to work together in the field of staff planning, in the field of theater command. I submit that if we follow that path, the services will soon learn how to work together in the other fields I described, starting with the joint purchasing of joint items.

**Mr. Denny:** You mustn't get too rough with Mr. Holt here. Mr. Dewey stands about 6 ft. 4 inches and Mr. Holt about 5 feet 4 inches.

**Mr. Holt:** Five feet two.

**Mr. Denny:** Maybe five feet two. Yes. (*Laughter.*)

**Mr. Holt:** I'd just like to ask Mr. Dewey another question suggested by his last remark that they learn and operate accordingly. How does it happen that down in Georgia the Navy is spending today millions of dollars to develop a naval hospital while the Army

is abandoning one that cost almost as much money? (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Dewey:** There are those of us who are suspicious that other factors than purely military factors have entered into the placing of hospitals within the confines of the United States. (*Applause.*) And while I'm here, I would like to ask Mr. Holt if he, in his talk about a lot of conflicts, hasn't confused—hasn't assumed—a conflict on the part of the Army and Navy that in reality is nothing but mal-administration on the part of the War Production Board, a board that was very slow in getting going, missed a lot of bets and has got to do another job next time if we're going to move out in a hurry? (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** You speak from experience, do you, Mr. Dewey? You were a member of that Board, weren't you?

**Mr. Dewey:** No.

**Mr. Holt:** Well, Mr. Dewey, in answer to that question, I don't think it will serve any useful purpose to call names but in private, I can call them. (*Laughter.*)

**Mr. Denny:** All right, Admiral Cooke, have you a question here, or shall we go on to questions from the audience? All right, we'll pause briefly for station identification at this time.

**Announcer:**

You are listening to America's Town Meeting, sponsored by *The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine. Tonight, Kiwanis President Hamilton Holt; Ground Forces Chief of Staff,



Lieutenant General Joseph Lawton Collins; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations Vice Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr.; and Armed Forces Consultant Bradley Dewey, are discussing the vital topic, "Should We Have a Single Department for Our Armed Forces?"

For a complete copy of this discussion, including the question period immediately following, send for the Town Meeting Bulletin. Write to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Enclose 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Mr. Denny.

## QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* Now, just before we take the questions from this audience, I'm going to give you all a treat, because in the midst of all this distinguished brass and gold braid here, there's a very charming, a very lovely movie star you've seen on the pictures of many magazines. I'm going to call on her husband in just a moment but I'd like you to have a look at her. Miss Jinx Falkenberg. Miss Falkenberg. (*Applause.*) You can have a question, too, Jinx, but I'm going to call on your husband. Last time I was with him we were forced down over an airfield in Oxford, England, on the way to try to make a speech and we didn't get there. Tex McCrary of the Air Forces, who's just out of uniform. Tex, I wonder if you have a comment to make. Incidentally, Tex helped us found the Town Meeting over ten years ago when he was one of the struggling young editors of *The Literary Digest*. Tex, have you a comment to make, or a question? (*Applause.*) Right in the direction of the parabolic mike.

*Mr. McCrary:* All right, George, as you probably know, I'm a news-

paper man again and when I found out about this program tonight, I went around Washington and asked a few questions to get some background on something I haven't heard much about for the three years I've been away from the country.

I found out an astounding thing in Washington. They've got three political parties down there now. One of them is the Democratic Party, and one is the Republican Party, and the other is the Navy. (*Laughter and applause.*)

You've got a situation where the Gallup poll shows that an overwhelming majority of the American people want unification, even if they don't understand it. (*Laughter.*) You've got a situation where every single theater commander, while he was still fighting the war recommended unification. I understand Admiral Nimitz has changed his mind. He's coming next week to explain why he did. That'll be interesting.

Here, tonight, you'll probably notice that there's no representative of the Air Force on the panel. I asked some questions about that

in Washington and found out the answer. The Air Forces are one hundred per cent back of the unification plan that has been outlined by General Collins, and the only hope of getting a wise decision on this thing is the continuing of just such discussions as this here tonight, until everybody understands what's involved. In that connection, Mr. Denny, I found out that if you want to arrange another of these discussions, you've got two pretty competent Air Force spokesmen available to you, General Jimmy Doolittle and Sascha Severson, who just got back from Japan today. (*Applause.*) If you don't mind, I'd like to ask just one question of Admiral Cooke. Sir, this is a question that, if we get this single department, the Navy is going to have to answer. In view of the batting average of the battleships in this war, and in view of the fact that the Navy's plan for a peacetime Navy calls for the taxpayer's paying for eighteen battleships from now on, exactly what use do you foresee for battleships in any future war?

*Mr. Denny:* Admiral Cooke, you probably expected that question.

*Admiral Cooke:* Plans for the postwar Navy call for five battleships and fourteen carriers, whatever may have been said in the press. Now, in regard to battleships and carriers and what they've done in this war, I would like to say that the question as to who did the most to win the war is sort of like the question of which is the most important leg of a three-

legged stool? We all played a big part.

But when army air exponents, whom I applaud, declare both battleships and carriers obsolescent, I would recall that battleships and carriers and ground forces placed B-29's on Saipan within range of Japan. When the B-29 losses mounted, battleships and carriers and Marines, placed army fighters on Iwo Jima to protect these B-29 flights over Japan.

Now, if we're going to have a Navy capable of giving its support to these Air Forces and to our Ground Forces to project them where they must go to fight a war, why we cannot be put in a position where a service is going publicly to pronounce and support obsolescence of the Navy. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Admiral Cooke. Now, before we get into these questions, here's another distinguished military expert who, I understand, is on the other side of the question, up there in the box, Major George Fielding Eliot. (*Applause.*)

*Major Eliot:* Well, George, I'm inclined to agree with Mr. Dewey that we ought to have a very careful survey of this whole question—not only unification, but the whole broad question of military policy and its implications—by a board of distinguished civilians who command the confidence of the whole country, before we take any final decisions that may bind the Nation in the future and may provide an inflexible form of national defense.

I think that flexibility—the ability to meet future exigencies



which we cannot foresee now—is the most important feature in any military policy for this country. We don't know what we're going into. We know that behind the veil of the future a great many things may be hidden. We need a flexible all-around policy.

I don't think that Mr. Holt would suggest that a single coach be appointed by a college to supervise the baseball team, the basketball team, the track team, and the football team. Some of the activities of the various national defense forces are just as different as those.

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Holt, do you want to comment on that?

*Mr. Holt:* Yes, I would. I'd like to say that in all the colleges I know anything about they do have an athletic director who has direct charge of all of those things. (*Applause.*)

*Major Eliot:* And we, sir, have a President of the United States, who is Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and who has to make the over-all decisions and has the constitutional responsibility. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Holt.

*Mr. Holt:* But, Major Eliot, the President is not there. His authority is divided between two forces, either of which and both of which act independently.

*Major Eliot:* Yes, sir, but I'm a little curious to know, since you want to bring the matter into that field, why you say that the discussion of these matters, the getting of all the facts from your joint chiefs of staff—a system which

worked admirably during this war and which gave us the best conducted war in our history, and which gave us victory at a very considerably less cost than any other war we ever fought—why that system now has to be discarded in favor of something new and untried? I don't understand that.

*Mr. Denny:* That brings General Collins out of his seat. General Collins.

*General Collins:* Perhaps this audience doesn't know that this question has been investigated by a committee of the joint chiefs of staff, which spent almost a year studying it all over the world. That committee recommended a single department. I might also add, to answer one phase of Mr. Eliot's statement that, as he said, the President has the responsibility for decision, so, also, we feel that the Congress of the United States has the responsibility for deciding whether we have a single department or not. That Congress is now having hearings on this very question. An independent board will never have the responsibility, as Admiral King stated before the Senate Military Affairs Committee a week or two ago. The decision must be made by your elected representatives who are now studying the matter and who will not make the decision, I am confident, until they have heard all aspects of this question. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Well, we hope some of them are listening in tonight. The gentleman right here on the aisle seat.

*Man:* General Collins, do you think we would save more lives if we had a unified command?

*Mr. Denny:* Would we save more lives if we had a unified command?

*General Collins:* I believe that ultimately we would. We did have a unified command in the field after Pearl Harbor, but I don't want to pose that the Navy is opposing a unified command in the field. I have a proposal, I believe, which will work in the field. The Navy is in accord with us in unity of command in the field, I understand from Admiral Cooke. I believe the question is a little beside the point.

*Mr. Denny:* All right. The lady in the balcony.

*Lady:* This is to Admiral Cooke. Don't you believe the reason the Navy is against unification of command of the armed forces is because the only man big enough right now for the job is the Army's Dwight P. Eisenhower? (*Laughter and applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* That's a tough one. You don't have to answer that.

*Admiral Cooke:* I have tried to make it clear that the Navy does not oppose unification. It does oppose a single department. I do not think that any naval officer would feel that he could run the war that was conducted against Germany. It so happened that I landed on the Normandy beaches on D-day, myself, as a representative of Admiral King, along with a representative of General Marshall. I saw what General Collins was doing in command of a

corps there, and I know that I could not do that, and I don't believe that General Eisenhower would say that he would understand how to direct the Pacific Ocean war. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now, here's a chance for G. I. Joe to ask a question of a general. Who's your question for?

*Soldier:* Mr. Holt, please. The question is, don't you think the crux of the entire question is not how many commands we have, but that the factors of confidence and cooperation should exist?

*Mr. Holt:* Precisely—with one head to see to it that we do get enforced discussions and get simultaneous decisions and instructions to all at one time.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman over there. Yes?

*Man:* My question is for Mr. Dewey. Mr. Dewey, the question is, don't you think that the processes of democracy are too cumbersome to cope with the lightning military decisions that will be thrust on us in the event of another war?

*Colonel Dewey:* I think they will be if we try to drive three rearing steeds with one fellow riding bareback and trying to bounce around and being pulled by three political influences. I think we're better off letting each man drive his own show, subject to the President and the Congress.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Dewey. General Collins. Yes?

*General Collins:* I just wondered what Mr. Dewey's alternative was—to turn these three

plunging steeds loose or to guide them? (*Laughter and applause.*)

Mr. Dewey: I believe they've been mighty well guided by the joint chiefs of staff. (*Applause.*) I believe there is no more powerful guide in the world than the guide you get from patriotic Americans who know their job and who know that they are being silently guided by the Commander in Chief who says, "You boys pull together as one team for the United States." I think they did a darn good job in this war and they won the war. (*Applause.*)

Man: My question is directed to Admiral Cooke. If we may assume that Admiral Cooke thinks that the costs are duplicated in a lot of cases, in having two services, does he have any other alternative to save some of these useless duplications of effort without the utilization of command?

Admiral Cooke: I would like to say that during the war the Navy bought for the Army three billion dollars worth of supplies. The Army bought for the Navy six billion dollars worth of supplies. Now, much is spoken of the two airfields, for instance in Washington. In Okinawa, we had 20 army airfields and three navy airfields and we wanted to use all of them. In Eniwetok, we only had one. Both the Army and Navy had to use it. If there had been room there for two, they could have used them to full capacity.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Admiral Cooke. Now while Mr. Holt and Mr. Dewey prepare to

settle this evening's discussion, Fred Cole has a message for you.

Mr. Cole: The dramatic story of Iliff David Richardson's hidden war against the Japs, from the fall of Bataan to the recapture of Leyte, has been told by Ira Wolfert in a current best seller "American Guerilla in the Philippines."

On a recent back cover of *The Reader's Digest*, Lieutenant Richardson in his own words wrote of some of his experiences. He said:

"When the first American submarine broke water off the Leyte beach, part of the important cargo she carried was a big medicine chest. Some of the drugs it contained were so new they weren't even mentioned in our medical books. But, fortunately, I'd read about the use of sulfa drugs in some back *Reader's Digests* I had borrowed from a priest. I actually held the *Digest* article in one hand while I scattered sulfa powder into wounds with the other.

"But my main job wasn't doctoring but intelligence. General MacArthur had said, 'Richardson will set up radio stations and furnish intelligence,' and I furnished it. But intelligence is a two way proposition. I got some of mine from fresh copies of *The Digest* brought in by the submarines. To learn what was going on back in the states, how the tides of Jap conquest had slowed, halted, were finally moving grudgingly into reverse—that kind of intelligence was worth millions to me.

"Now that I'm home again and know what's going on here, I realize more than ever how much it means to the men still overseas to be up-to-date on the world outside. I can tell you two things he wants more than anything else. First, he wants letters from home including everything that's happened on his block. Second, he wants to know what is happening in all the United States—what men and



women are thinking about, talking about, reading, getting done. That's where *The Reader's Digest* comes in. *The Digest* brings home to him in a package that fits in his hip pocket."

Now for the summaries of tonight's discussion, *The Reader's Digest* returns you to Mr. Denny.

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Dewey, will you give us the summary for the negative, please?

**Mr. Dewey:** In summarizing the debate, I can do no better than quote General Alexander A. Vandegrift, combat hero of the United States Marine Corps, when he said with reference to the army proposal for unification. I quote, "No one has explained what it is. None will commit themselves as to its exact implications, but its proponents are uniformly insistent that it must be put into effect at once as if to correct some unrevealed and malignant defect existing in the war machine which has so recently gained for our Nation the greatest victory in its history."

I submit that it's time to go slow. Let us determine what we can do to improve the existing set up before we commit ourselves to the complication and extra overhead of the army proposal.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Dewey. Mr. Holt, may we have your summary for the affirmative?

**Mr. Holt:** Yes, Mr. Denny. I believe that a single department for our armed forces is essential for these basic reasons: It offers the best means for making the wisest decisions. It will preserve the essential integrity of our three main

branches of national defense; the Army, Navy, and Air Forces.

By creating a single department we will create a single team, in which each member is trained and developed to play his proper role. By creating a single department, we reduce politics to a minimum. There will be one general appropriation for our national defense. Each member of this team will benefit by pooling of scientific research and common supervision of procurement and industrial mobilization plans.

The experience of this war demonstrates the practicability and need of the unified command. The discovery of atomic power and all that it means, makes a unified command absolutely essential. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Holt, Mr. Bradley Dewey, General Collins, and Admiral Cooke. Our special greetings tonight to Kiwanians throughout the country who organized those several hundred Town Meeting discussion groups as a part of this nation-wide Town Meeting. We hope you will continue with us in the weeks ahead.

Next month for our December 13 meeting, the League of Women Voters will organize special Town Meeting listening discussion groups when we consider the question of price controls during reconversion.

On next Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, we turn to a question most appropriate to this occasion, a question in which we must examine ourselves: the victors in the war we have just won.

With the aid of the frank and courageously outspoken foreign minister of Australia, the Honorable Herbert V. Evatt; the distinguished United States Senator from New Hampshire, the Honorable Charles W. Tobey; the editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, Mr. Norman Cousins; and a real hero of this war, an American-

born Japanese airman, the winner of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Sergeant Ven Kuroki, we will consider the question, "We Won the War, Are We Winning the Peace?" What do you think?

*Announcer:* Be sure to listen next week and every week when *The Reader's Digest* brings you Town Meeting. (*Applause.*)

## TOWN MEETING PREVIEW

### Should We Support the Continuance of Colonial Empires?

By CHARLES E. MARTZ

*The subject outlined in this preview is to our best knowledge the one which will be used on Town Meeting of the Air Thursday evening, November 29. However, in view of the rapidity of wartime developments there is always a possibility that another topic which seems more urgent may be substituted.*

The activities of British troops against the Indonesian forces in Java, a colony of the Netherlands, emphasizes the determination of the colonial nations to see that their hold on subject lands is not weakened. Each of the World Wars in our generation has weakened the grip of the losers on their colonies, but the victors have clung tenaciously.

The system of mandates after the last war and the projected trusteeships under the new UNO suggest a somewhat vague dissatisfaction with a state of affairs under which it is possible for any nation to rule a subject people for the advantage and profit of the mother country, and even to create a threat to world peace. In practice, the mandates became virtual colonies.

It remains to be seen whether or not the trusteeships can become what they are intended.

The United States has given a shining example to the world in our government of the Philippine Islands. Our first shipment to the Philippines after pacification was a cargo of school teachers. This is emblematic of our policy. We have taken seriously our duty to prepare the Filipinos for independence, and we have done a good job. The islands are to become independent next year.

There are a few statements upon which all will find some degree of agreement. The first is that self-government is not something which can be conferred upon a people. It is a skilled occupation. We have been learning the craft for a thou-



sand years, and there are times when we suspect that we don't do too well.

Numerous examples can be cited to show that peoples who have been suddenly faced with the problems of self-government without previous experience have been plunged into confusion. The alternative for colonial empires is probably not immediate independence for many colonial peoples.

Then there is the problem of helping backward peoples toward a better life. Health and hygiene must be brought to them. Roads and railroads must be built. Schools must be established. Perhaps the generalization is hard to establish, but it is said that there are very few colonial peoples who have not progressed more rapidly as colonies than they would have advanced if left to their own strength and knowledge.

A third interesting proposition is that the ultimate goal of all colonial empires must be self-government for the people. Where the policy of the mother country is to establish conditions under which this progress can be as rapid as possible, the colonists are indeed fortunate. Where, on the other hand, the mother country pursues a policy of keeping the colonists in a subordinate position, both politically and economically, to perpetuate a stream of profits to the home land, the system has little to recommend it.

It is not the function of this *Preview* to go into details and to try to list the colonial powers and colonial peoples in each group.

There are some that approach the policy of the United States in the Philippines. There are others which are far at the other end of the line.

Thus far, we have been suggesting the question, "Are colonial empires an international phenomenon which serves the general good?" The question before us is quite different. It asks whether or not the United States should do anything about the system which now exists in the world. Should we interfere in the fight which is raging in Java? Should we have something to say about what shall be the future of India?

Recent decades have been full of events which have convinced us that peace anywhere in the world is an American interest. As long as spots of tension exist, the peace of the world will be threatened. As long as there are "have-not" nations which feel that the possession of profitable colonies by other nations is a discrimination, the peace of the world is not secure. As long as essential raw materials, such as rubber and tin, are produced almost solely in the colonies of some other nation, there may be suspicion and friction. It may be maintained with some justice that the existence of colonial empires is an American concern.

What can we do about it? That is a practical question. We are probably not ready to plunge the world into a major war by opposing the forces of major colonial powers and by helping native peoples who are fighting for independence. We might throw our influence into the UNO to induce



all colonial powers to relinquish their colonies to international supervision. Our economic might is so great at the present time that our influence might be used with some success in that direction.

In the meantime, we have some

colonial problems of our own which are giving us trouble. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are real problems. It might be well if we started on this problem by finding a way out of our own dilemmas.

**CORRECTION:** In Town Meeting Bulletin, No. 24, for October 11, Mr. Walter Reuther was credited with a statement which was actually made by Mr. George Romney. On page 15, column one, Mr. Reuther's statement ended with the sentence: "It is nonsense that there's enough purchasing power."

The remainder of the comment was made by Mr. Romney.



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